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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON—MAY 1, 1936

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS—1936 AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM—NORTHEAST REGION

### PURPOSE AND METHOD

1. Q. What is the authority for the Agricultural Conservation Program?
  - A. The Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, signed February 29, 1936.
2. Q. What are the main purposes of the program?
  - A. To conserve and improve farm land and to protect rivers and harbors from the results of soil erosion.
3. Q. How can the program accomplish those purposes?
  - A. By encouraging farmers to plant more soil-conserving crops and to adopt more soil-building practices.
4. Q. How will farmers be helped to take those steps?
  - A. Class I, or soil-conserving payments, will be made to farmers who divert some of their acreage from soil-depleting crops to soil-conserving crops. Class II, or soil-building payments, will be made to farmers who use approved soil-building practices.
5. Q. What is the goal for soil-conserving crops in 1936?
  - A. To increase soil-conserving crops by about 30,000,000 acres or 30 percent of 1930 acreage of these crops.
6. Q. Does this new program conflict with the work of any other agency engaged in soil-conservation work?
  - A. No. The program is distinct from the work of any other agencies such as the Soil Conservation and Forest Services. Broadly speaking, however, all such agencies are working together, but with each handling its own phase of the problem.

### PAYMENTS

7. Q. From whom will farmers receive payments?
  - A. In 1933 farmers will receive payments directly from the Federal Government. When States have worked out their own plans (which are provided for in the act), allocations will be made to States by the Federal Government and States will pay farmers.
8. Q. When will farmers be paid this year?
  - A. Farmers will be paid as soon as possible after they have met the standards of the program, and county committees have checked their farming operations for the year.
9. Q. Can one farmer qualify for both classes of payment?
  - A. Yes. A farmer who measures up to standards of the program is eligible to receive both class I and class II payments. It also is possible for a farmer to qualify for either class without qualifying for the other.
10. Q. Will farmers sign contracts in connection with the program?
  - A. No.

11. Q. Will all farmers who measure up to approved standards receive payments this year?  
 A. Not unless they file applications.

### WORK SHEET

12. Q. What steps must a farmer take before he can file an application for payment?  
 A. Fill out a work sheet, file the work sheet with his county committee, and get back a copy of the work sheet after the county committee has checked it and established base acreage figures for the farm. Then he must either divert some of his soil-depleting base acreage to soil-conserving crops or use approved soil-building practices, or both.
13. Q. What is the purpose of the work sheet?  
 A. To list the way acreage on the farm was used in 1935 and to help the farmer plan his farming operations so that he may take part in the Agricultural Conservation Program for 1936.
14. Q. Who may file a work sheet?  
 A. Any producer who is an owner, landlord, cash tenant, standing or fixed-rent tenant, or share tenant operating an entire farm.
15. Q. Who assists the producer in filling out a work sheet?  
 A. A committeeman or some other qualified person.
16. Q. Can a landlord submit a work sheet covering a farm being operated by a cash tenant, or standing or fixed-rent tenant?  
 A. No, for such a farm the work sheet should be submitted by the operator.
17. Q. Should a person who owns, operates, or controls more than one farm submit a work sheet covering each of his farms?  
 A. Yes.
18. Q. May a share tenant who is renting land from two or more owners or landlords file one work sheet covering all such land?  
 A. No, he should file a work sheet covering each separately owned tract of land.
19. Q. If the operator's farm is mortgaged or is being purchased on installments, should the person to whom he is obligated sign the work sheet or application?  
 A. No. Only the operator should sign the work sheet or application.
20. Q. If a farm is located in more than one county, in which county should the work sheet and application be submitted?  
 A. They should be submitted in the county in which the farm-operating headquarters is located, or, in the absence of headquarters on the farm, in the county in which the major part of the farm is located.

### ORGANIZATION

21. Q. Will the standards of the program be the same all over the country?  
 A. No. The general purpose of the program is the same, but standards vary, so that they will fit good farming practices in different States and regions.
22. Q. Is the country divided into any definite regions?  
 A. Yes. For the purposes of administration five regions have been established—the Northeast, the East Central, the Southern, the North Central, and the Western.
23. Q. What States are in the Northeast Region?  
 A. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

## CLASSIFICATION OF LAND USE

24. Q. What is cropland?
- A. Cropland is tillable land from which at least one crop other than wild hay has been harvested since January 1, 1930. Cropland also includes orchards and vineyards that had not reached bearing age by January 1, 1936.
25. Q. How is use of cropland classified?
- A. Land in soil-depleting crops is classified as soil-depleting, land in soil-conserving crops is classified as soil-conserving.
26. Q. How would a farmer classify land that had produced both a soil-conserving and a soil-depleting crop in the same year?
- A. He would classify such land as soil-depleting, except in any special cases where other provisions are definitely made.
27. Q. What crops are classified as soil-depleting?
- A. Corn.  
Tobacco.  
Potatoes.  
Sweetpotatoes.  
Truck and vegetable crops including melons and strawberries.  
Grain sorghums and sweet sorghums.  
Small grains including wheat, oats, barley, rye, buckwheat, and small grain mixtures, if pastured or harvested for grain or hay (except for certain grains used as green manure or nurse crops as provided in the soil-conserving classification).  
Annual grasses, including Sudan, millets, and Italian ryegrass, if harvested for hay or seed.  
Annual legumes, including soybeans, field beans, field peas, and cowpeas, if harvested as grain or hay.
28. Q. What crops are classified as soil conserving?
- A. *Small grains*.—Rye, barley, oats, and grain mixtures, winter pastured or not, and turned under as green manure crops.  
*Annual grasses*.—Sudan, millets, and Italian ryegrass, turned under as green manure crops, pastured, or left on the land.  
*Perennial grasses*.—Kentucky bluegrass, Canada bluegrass, timothy, rough stalked meadow grass, perennial ryegrass, orchard grass, redtop, and mixtures of these, without a nurse crop or with oats, barley, or grain mixtures as a nurse crop which is cut green or pastured sufficiently to prevent grain formation.  
*Annual legumes*.—Vetch, winter peas, annual sweetclover, crimson clover, and annual lespedeza, without a nurse crop or with oats, barley, or grain mixtures as a nurse crop which is cut green or pastured sufficiently to prevent grain formation; soybeans, field peas, field beans, and cowpeas, when turned under as green manure crops.  
*Biennial legumes*.—Sweet, red, alsike, and mammoth clovers, and mixtures seeded with at least 40 percent of these by weight without a nurse crop or with oats, barley, or grain mixtures as a nurse crop.  
*Perennial legumes*.—Alfalfa, white clover, and mixtures seeded with at least 40 percent of these by weight, without a nurse crop or with oats, barley, or grain mixtures as a nurse crop.  
*Forest trees*.—Forest trees planted on crop land since January 1, 1934.
29. Q. Are oats seeded in the spring of 1936 in the same classification as oats seeded in the fall of 1936?
- A. Yes.

30. Q. How would a farmer classify use of land (either cropland or noncropland) which did not produce either soil-depleting or soil-conserving crops?

- A. He would classify use of such land as neutral. Neutral use would not count in establishing bases.

31. Q. What are the neutral uses of farm land?

- A. Clean cultivated vineyards, tree fruits, small fruits, and nut trees, of bearing age (if they are interplanted, the actual interplanted acreage shall be classified as soil depleting or soil conserving, according to the interplanted crop).

Idle cropland.

Cultivated fallow land.

Wasteland, roads, lanes, lots, yards, and other similar noncropland.

Woodland, other than cropland planted to forest trees since January 1, 1934.

32. Q. How is permanent pasture classified?

- A. Land that has been in permanent pasture since before January 1, 1930, is noncropland and is not included in establishing bases.

#### BASE ACREAGE

33. Q. What must a farmer do to qualify for a class I payment in 1936?

- A. Plant some of his soil-depleting base acreage to soil-conserving crops.

34. Q. What is meant by a soil-depleting base acreage?

- A. The county committee, working from the figures submitted on the work sheet, establishes a soil-depleting base acreage for each farm. Every farm will have a general soil-depleting base covering all soil-depleting crops except tobacco. Farms on which tobacco is grown will have a separate tobacco soil-depleting base. The total soil-depleting base for a farm growing tobacco would be the general soil-depleting base plus the tobacco soil-depleting base.

35. Q. On what past records will a farm's general soil-depleting base be determined?

- A. Largely on the farm's record for 1935. The general soil-depleting base for each farm will be the acreage of soil-depleting crops (except tobacco) harvested in 1935. In some cases, however, the county committee will make adjustments in the 1935 figures in establishing the base. If any acres were retired under one of the 1935 commodity-adjustment programs, those retired acres will be added to the soil-depleting acreage actually harvested in 1935. The committee may make adjustments, also, if because of weather conditions or other factors, any farmer's 1935 record would give him an unusually high or unusually low base.

36. Q. How will a farm's tobacco soil-depleting base acreage be established?

- A. Under the procedure for the tobacco-adjustment program for 1936. However, the base may be decreased if the operator requests it; and it may be either increased or decreased if the county committee determines that adjustment is needed to give a farm a fair tobacco base as compared with similar neighboring farms.

#### CLASS I PAYMENTS

37. Q. How will class I payments, except on tobacco acreage, be determined?

- A. Class I payments will be made on acres diverted from the general base acreage of soil-depleting crops to soil-conserving crops. The rate per acre will depend on the productivity of the farm. *For the whole*

**country**, the average rate will be \$10 per acre. If a farm is more productive than the average for all farms in the country, the rate will be correspondingly higher than \$10. If the farm is less productive than average, the rate will be lower than \$10.

38. Q. What is the largest percentage of his general soil-depleting base on which a farmer may receive class I payments?
- A. Fifteen percent. He may divert as much more as he desires to soil-conserving crops, but he will receive payments for only 15 percent.
39. Q. How will class I payments in connection with tobacco be determined?
- A. Payments will be made on acres of the tobacco soil-depleting base which are planted to soil-conserving crops in 1936. The payment for each acre will be the rate for the type of tobacco grown multiplied by the farm's average per acre yield of that tobacco. The rate for Connecticut Valley types 51 and 52 will be 4 cents a pound. The rate for any other kind of tobacco will be 3 cents a pound.
40. Q. What is the largest percentage of his tobacco soil-depleting base on which a farmer may receive class I payments?
- A. Thirty percent.

#### CLASS II PAYMENTS

41. Q. What must a farmer do to qualify for a class II, or soil-building payment?
- A. Use one or more of the soil-building practices approved for his State.
42. Q. What is a soil-building practice?
- A. Planting of crops or treatment of soil that will increase soil fertility. That would include, for example, planting new seedings of specified soil-conserving crops, or liming pasture. The State committee of each State in the northeast has drawn up its own list of approved practices. (A complete list of practices is published in N E R Bulletin 2.)
43. Q. How much is the payment per acre for adopting soil-building practices?
- A. Each State's list of practices includes also the rates per acre for those practices. In general the rates per acre established by each committee will be half or more of the average cash cost of carrying out the practices.
44. Q. Can a farmer receive a class II payment for a soil-building practice if he has received the seed, labor, or materials for that practice free from a State or Federal agency?
- A. No.
45. Q. Can a farmer receive a class II payment for using an approved soil-building practice on acres diverted from soil-depleting crops, for which he also receives a class I payment?
- A. Yes. He can receive payment for using approved soil-building practices on acres diverted from soil-depleting crops. He also can receive class II payments for soil-building practices used on other crop acres or on permanent pasture.
46. Q. To be sure of qualifying for a class II payment does a farmer need to do anything besides carrying out one or more of the soil-building practices on his State list?
- A. Yes. A farmer should see his committeeman and make sure that the practices he plans to use are considered as adapted to the soil of his particular farm.
47. Q. What is the limit of the total amount of class II payment that can be paid on any one farm?
- A. The number of dollars equal to the number of acres in soil-conserving crops on the farm in 1936. That limit is called the soil-building allowance.

48. Q. Can any acreage not classified as soil-conserving be counted in establishing the soil-building allowance?
- A. Yes; in one special case. The acreage that has been in vegetables, including potatoes and sweetpotatoes, and then is planted to a winter cover or green manure crop which is turned under between January 1 and October 1, 1936, will be added to the soil-conserving acres that determine the farm's soil-building allowance. The classification of such vegetable acreage, however, will be soil depleting.
49. Q. Are there any exceptions for setting the soil-building allowance of small farms?
- A. Yes. The total class II payment may be as much as \$10 on farms that have less than 10 acres in soil-conserving crops.
50. Q. What is the relationship between the soil-building allowance and the soil-building payment?
- A. The soil-building allowance is the largest sum which can be paid for soil-building practices on any one farm in 1936. The soil-building payment is the sum of the per-acre rates for soil-building practices carried out in 1936. The soil-building payment cannot be larger than the soil-building allowance; but the allowance can be larger than the payment a farmer earns.
51. Q. Is the acreage of clover or other soil-conserving crops counted in computing a farm's 1936 soil-building allowance?
- A. Yes; if no soil-depleting crop is harvested from the acreage in 1936. Oats, barley, and grain mixtures are not classified as soil depleting when used as a nurse crop for biennial or perennial legumes even if harvested for hay or grain. When used as a nurse crop for grasses or annual legumes these crops are soil depleting unless cut green or pastured.
52. Q. If a green manure crop is plowed down this spring and followed by corn or some other soil-depleting crop, is the acreage counted in determining the soil-building allowance?
- A. No; but plowing down the green manure crop between March 1 and November 1 would qualify the farmer for a soil-building payment.
53. Q. If pasture from which no crop has been harvested since January 1, 1930, is plowed up and seeded to a soil-conserving crop in 1936, does it count in establishing the soil-building allowance?
- A. No. In 1936 the land would not be cropland.
- Q. Does such a seeding qualify a farmer for a soil-building payment?
- A. Yes; if carried out in accordance with a soil-building practice which has been approved.
54. Q. The soil-building practice of planting forest trees on cropland or pasture requires that the number of trees planted on each acre be in accordance with good farming practice. Could a farmer plant half the required number of trees and receive payment at half the specified rate?
- A. No. For each soil-building practice the requirements listed are the minimum performance for which any payment will be made.
55. Q. Are all soil-building practices required to be carried out in accordance with good farming practices?
- A. Yes; the methods followed and the kinds and quantities of seeds, trees, and other materials must conform to good farming practices.

56. Q. Who can advise the farmer as to good practices for his farm or locality?
- A. The State committee will issue information and advice regarding methods of carrying out practices and regarding the adaptation of certain practices to certain types of farms.
57. Q. Why are the requirements for soil-building practices in some instances higher than the standards for those practices commonly followed in the State?
- A. The soil-building practices which qualify a farmer for payment are the best farming practices which have been recommended by State colleges and extension services. Many of them cost more than some farmers have been able to afford. In sharing the cost of those practices, the Government asks farmers to use the best methods. Otherwise the program could not be highly effective in conserving and improving land throughout the country.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL PAYMENTS

58. Q. What are the minimum requirements a farmer must meet to receive full class I and class II payments?
- A. He must have an acreage of soil-conserving crops equal to 15 percent of his general soil-depleting base; plus 20 percent of his tobacco soil-depleting base, if he has one.
59. Q. Do those required acres have to be acres diverted this year?
- A. No. They may be either acres diverted in 1936, or acres already in soil-conserving crops.
60. Q. What is the rate of deduction from total payments if a farm lacks the required acreage in soil-conserving crops?
- A. For each acre that the farm is short of the required acreage of soil-conserving crops, one and a half times the rate of the farm's class I payment will be deducted.
61. Q. If a farmer increases either his general soil-depleting acreage or his tobacco soil-depleting acreage, or both, above his base acreage figures, will he still be eligible to receive payments?
- A. Yes, but deductions from his total payment will be made for each acre by which he exceeds his base. The deduction for exceeding the general soil-depleting base will be at the same rate as the class I payment for the farm. The deduction for exceeding the tobacco soil-depleting base will be the same as the class I rate for the type of tobacco grown.

### DIVISION OF PAYMENTS

62. Q. If the operator of a farm is not the owner, how will class I payments be divided?
- A. Class I payments will be divided between owners and tenants in the same proportion as the owner and tenant divide the principal soil-depleting crop, or the proceeds of that crop. Payments may be divided differently if the State committee recommends a different basis and the Secretary of Agriculture approves it.
63. Q. To whom will class II payments be made?
- A. Class II payments will be made to the producer who bore the expense of carrying out the approved soil-building practices. If two or more producers shared the expense, the class II payment will be divided equally between them.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**64. Q.** What agencies are administering the program?

A. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture, the State extension services, State agricultural conservation committees, county committees, and community committees.

**65. Q.** What is a State committee?

A. In each State, a committee of from three to five members recommends general policies for carrying out the program in its State, and soil-building practices for approval of the Secretary of Agriculture. The majority of the members are required to be farmers. Members are recommended by the State director of extension, and appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

**66. Q.** What is a county committee?

A. A county committee is a group chosen by the board of directors of the county agricultural conservation association. The chief duties of a county committee are to establish base acreage figures for farms after work sheets have been turned in, review applications for payments, and to make any investigations that are necessary.

**67. Q.** What is the county agricultural conservation association?

A. All persons owning or operating farms in a county are eligible for membership in the association. In each community, members of the county association elect community committeemen. The chairmen of the community committees automatically constitute the board of directors of the county association.

**68. Q.** What are the duties of the community committees?

A. Community committees may help farmers fill out work sheets and applications, and may assist in receiving, checking, and approving all such documents. They also will act in an advisory capacity for both farmers and county committees.

**69. Q.** Was the regular method of selecting local committees followed this year?

A. Not in all cases. In order to get the program into operation as soon as possible, many local committees were appointed by State committees. In such counties, associations will be formed and elections held as soon as possible.